

## AMHERST COUNCIL ON AGING MINUTES

### September 17, 2009

**Members Present:** Daniel Clapp, Joan Golowich, Joel Gordon, Rosemary Kofler, Kathy Koplow, Mary Jane Laus, Barbara Sutherland

**Absent:** Doris Holden, Juana Trujillo

**Select Board Liaison:** Gerry Weiss

**Staff Present:** Nancy Pagano (Director/Program Director), Maura Plante (Assistant Director/Services), Karen Erman (Administrative Assistant)

**Guests:** none

#### **Welcome:**

Dan Clapp, Co-Chair, called the Council on Aging meeting to order at 9:09 AM.

#### **Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

The minutes of the July 9, 2009 meeting were approved and accepted.

#### **Friends of Amherst Senior Center Treasurer's Report:**

A handout was provided. There is \$19,473.28 in the checking account and \$65,772.17 in the investment account. The bequest of \$6,910.72 from Phyllis Joyce was deposited into the checking account. FY10 donations to date are \$1,100. **Nancy** commented. Now that the Friends have a 501c3 status, they have to report to the IRS in great detail. Previously the only report was to the Attorney General's office. Because of the detail required for the IRS it was decided to invest in a professional accountant to complete the report. Karen's attention to detail is extremely helpful, but an accountant could also be useful to the Senior Center.

### CONTINUING BUSINESS

#### **Friends Update:**

**Dan** reported about the Friends meeting of July 14. The by-laws include 2 COA members on the Board. Doris, Treasurer, is one of those members. Rosemary is the other member, as nominated by the COA. Dan is an ex-officio member. The annual meeting was never held in June. It was to be held on July 14, but the required number of members was not present. It is necessary that eight people from the general membership plus a quorum of the Board be present. Therefore, no vote could be taken on the amended by-laws or for election of members to the Board. The annual meeting was postponed to November 6 at 2:00 PM. An announcement will be made in the *Senior Spirit*, an official notice will go in the Gazette. It was suggested that a letter should go out to all 135 members announcing the November 6 annual meeting. It was suggested that the letter should remind contributors that they comprise the general membership of the Friends and that they be encouraged to attend the meeting and make nominations to the Board. There was discussion of fundraising plans for a recipe book and a spring variety show with Donna Lee.

**Joel** asked who determines the officers of the Friends Board.

**Nancy:** The general membership elects members to the Board. The President of the Board appoints a nominating committee to nominate the officers. The Board elects the officers from that slate. The general membership does not have a role in electing the officers.

#### **Parade Plans for September 27<sup>th</sup>:**

**Nancy** showed us the new Senior Center banner that will be carried in the parade. Seniors can march or ride in the van. We will meet in the Big Y parking lot at 11:00 AM. An information sheet was distributed.

#### **Select Board Announcements:**

**Gerry** reported that the budget news remains grim. Mid-year state budget cuts will not be known until October. Talks of a possible override are beginning. Gerry announced he would be stepping down from the Select Board in March.

## SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE

### **Ad Hoc survey Committee:**

**Joel** reported. The 1,100 survey postcards were mailed out on September 3 to randomly chosen seniors and 'Boomers'. Fifty were returned or undeliverable. As of September 16 there were about 200 email responses. Those that do not respond by email will receive a paper copy by regular mail. The final analysis and report is expected before the end of the year.

### **Highland Valley Elder Services:**

**Barbara** reported on the September 14 meeting. John Lutz, Associate Director of Community Development, presented the very ambitious plans for 2010-2014. Caring community-building grant awards will be presented later this week. The Northampton COA received a \$5000 grant from Cooley Dickinson for transportation of elders to doctor appointments, etc.

**Nancy:** HVES pays us \$1.19 for every meal delivered. Out of that we pay for the staff and gas reimbursement at \$.50 per mile.

Nancy submitted a request for a grant to pay for Evie Ross to work 5 days a week with Ferne, which would allow her to fill in as a driver when needed. The reporting system for HVES is transitioning to a computer system, involving additional costs.

**Maura** submitted a grant request that relates to working with Kathy at the Clark House and Juana of the Amherst Housing Authority to create more of a feeling of community in the housing complexes. The goal is for people to assist one another when a need/offer exists and for individuals to be more available to one another. Evie Ross would facilitate that program because she is bilingual and she knows folks from the lunch program.

## NEW BUSINESS

### **40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Historical Booklet:**

**Nancy** reported. She passed around the prototype. It will be done in color. Copy Cat quoted us \$6.00 per copy as a special price during the month of October. Those who have donated to the 40<sup>th</sup> and 'key' people in town will get a free copy. We could request a small donation in addition. Nancy suggested printing 500 copies initially.

COA members enthusiastically thanked Nancy for the excellent booklet, which she produced while simultaneously handling the stress and heavy workload of her daily schedule.

### **Flu Clinic:**

**Nancy** reported. Several flu clinics will be held this year. The first, for seasonal flu, will be held on Tuesday, October 6 with a make-up date of Wednesday, October 14. When the H1N1 (swine flu) vaccine becomes available, those clinic dates will be announced. Seniors are at less risk for H1N1 than young people and children. Keith Carlson, the Public Health nurse, will run the first 2 clinics before he leaves the area. A new nurse will be hired soon and transition in.

Nancy raised a concern she has about the heavily used classroom, Room 101, at Bangs. On election days Room 101 is the only room that can be used to serve the HVES noon lunch. It is our main activity room for classes and programs. In fact, there are so many events that it often becomes difficult to find space for all of our programs. Nancy had once expressed to Town Manager a desire to have exercise equipment available at the Senior Center, perhaps using the Veterans Office when it becomes vacated. Larry Shaffer in turn suggested the possibility of a cardiac rehab lab in collaboration with CDH. It would bring machines to the Center. As a trade off our seniors could use the machines. However, Larry would like to use Room 101 for that purpose, plus the two vacated offices across the hall (one of which is the old Veterans office).

COA members expressed grave concern about the impact the loss of Room 101 would have on our seniors and the programs and activities they rely on. Among other things we are legally required to provide space for the HVES lunch program, and Room 101 is essential on election days.

The role of the COA is to advocate for seniors therefore a motion was made and passed unanimously.

**The COA will compose a letter, written by a sub-committee, to the Town Manager expressing our concern about possible plans for other use of Room 101 and the adverse effect that would have on the Senior Center. A copy of the letter will be sent to the Select Board.**

Members of the sub-committee will be Dan Clapp, Joel Gordon and Rosemary Kofler.

The COA adjourned at 10:45 AM.

**The next meeting of the COA will be held on October 8, 2009 at 9:00 AM.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Rosemary Kofler, Secretary

The approved minutes of the July 9, 2009 meeting were delivered to the Select Board office to be filed.